

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 20-38 are pending in the application. Claim 20 is currently amended.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,700,127 to Harada et al. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. However, given the Examiner's stated confusion from the wording of the claim that the handling device and conveying device of Independent Claim 20 are separate, the Applicant has amended Claim 20 to further clarify the already apparent distinction.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 22-38 under 35 U.S.C. (a) as obvious over Harada, et al. and further in view of Toshima and Lynch and Bacchi et al. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. In view of the arguments and amendments listed above, the combinations of the references cited do not disclose the entire apparatus as claimed.

With regard to the Examiner's statement that Claim 30 would be allowable but is currently drawn to a rejected base claim, the Applicant believes that the above-listed amendments correct the problem. However, if the Examiner determines to maintain his refusal of the base claim, it is requested that an Examiner's Amendment amending Claim 30 as follows be entered:

30. (currently amended) An apparatus ~~according to~~
claim 27, for loading substrates upon and unloading substrates from at
least two processing stations, wherein said apparatus is provided with
a conveying device for a linear transport of substrates, said conveying
device further provided with a conveyor belt having carriers for
substrates, wherein respectively at least two of said carriers are

symmetrically disposed relative to a central axis of said conveyor belt,
and said apparatus is further provided with at least one rotatable
handling device for transporting substrates between said conveying
device and said processing stations, wherein said conveying device is
disposed between said at least two processing stations, and wherein
said at least one handling device is disposed above said conveying
device.

However, if the Examining Attorney withdraws his rejections of the base claims, the Applicant does not wish to amend claim 30.

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the statement that the objections to the drawings are withdrawn.

The Applicant has attempted to be fully responsive to the Office Action, and believes the claims should now be in line for allowance. However, should the Examiner have any further suggestions or recommendations, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call from him in order to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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